

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

- 1           1.    A software tool for use in configuring firewalls, comprising:  
2                an interface which communicates with a database to obtain the  
3                identification of firewall devices associated with a network and generate a first  
4                display which lists said devices; and  
5                means responsive to the selection of one of the devices in said list to  
6                generate a second display which lists conduits within said device, wherein each  
7                conduit is identified by descriptive names stored in said database for local and  
8                external devices and/or networks that are logically connected by the conduit.
- 1           2.    The tool of claim 1, further including means responsive to the  
2                selection of one of the devices listed in said first display to generate a third display  
3                which lists internal networks owned by an entity associated with the selected  
4                device, and means to selectively open and close conduits respectively  
5                corresponding to said internal networks.
- 1           3.    The tool of claim 2 wherein said means to selectively open and  
2                close conduits comprises a graphical object adjacent each listing of an internal  
3                network that can be selected by a user to toggle between open and closed states for  
4                the listed network.
- 1           4.    The tool of claim 2 wherein said third display further includes  
2                means for adding a new conduit to one of the internal networks.
- 1           5.    The tool of claim 4 wherein said means for adding a new conduit  
2                to one of the internal networks includes an identification of each protocol that can  
3                be associated with the new conduit, and graphical objects via which a user can  
4                select each of said protocols.

1                   6. A method for configuring firewalls, comprising the following  
2 steps:  
3                   communicating with a database to obtain the identification of firewall  
4 devices associated with a network;  
5                   generating a first display which lists said devices; and  
6                   detecting the selection of one of the devices in said list; and  
7                   generating a second display which lists conduits within said device,  
8 wherein each conduit is identified by descriptive names stored in said database for  
9 local and external devices and/or networks that are logically connected by the  
10 conduit.

1                   7. The method of claim 6, further including the steps of generating a  
2 third display which lists internal networks owned by an entity associated with the  
3 selected device, in response to the selection of one of the devices listed in said first  
4 display, and which enables a user to selectively open and close conduits  
5 respectively corresponding to said internal networks.

1                   8. The method of claim 7 wherein said third display includes a  
2 graphical object adjacent each listing of an internal network that can be selected by  
3 a user to toggle between open and closed states for the listed network.

1                   9. The method of claim 7 wherein said third display further enables  
2 a user to add a new conduit to one of the internal networks.

1                   10. The method of claim 9 wherein said third display includes an  
2 identification of each protocol that can be associated with the new conduit, and  
3 graphical objects via which a user can select each of said protocols.